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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE NATIONAL COMMUNICATION OF

POLAND

submitted under Articles 4 and 12 of the
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

In accordance with decision 9/2 of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee of the Framework Convention on Climate Change (INC/FCCC) and endorsed by the Conference of the Parties in its decision 3/CP.1 (FCCC/CP/1995/7/Add.1), the secretariat is to make available, in the official languages of the United Nations, the executive summaries of the national communications submitted by Annex I Parties.

Note: Executive summaries of national communications issued prior to the first session of the Conference of the Parties bear the symbol A/AC.237/NC/___.

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Copies of the national communication of Poland may be obtained from the following:

**Ministry of Environmental Protection,
Natural Resources and Forestry
Department of Air and Land Protection
Warszawa, Wawelska 52/54
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This document has been submitted without formal editing.

The aim of the report

1. The aim of this report is to present to the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), according to Article 12, paragraphs 1 and 2, the policy of the Polish Government implemented in actions leading to the fulfilment of obligations the Convention.

2. The report covers the inventory of the greenhouse gases emission sources and sinks in Poland, in the base year 1988, the assessed emission of the greenhouses gases for the year 2000, information on the actions planned and undertaken that aim to limit the emission and to increase sinks of these gases and on the possibilities to adapt Polish economy to changed climatic conditions.

Poland's commitments of the Convention

3. The ratification of the Convention put upon the Annex I Parties commitments to stabilize the greenhouse gases emission by the year 2000 on the level of 1990. The consequence of this obligation is the preparation and the implementation of the national programme of actions aimed to achieve this goal.

4. Article 4, paragraph 6, of the Convention allows countries with economies in transition a certain flexibility in the implementation of the commitments under the Convention. Taking into account the above, the Polish Government acknowledges the right of Poland to accept the year 1988 as reference year for the implementation of the commitments to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change instead of the year 1990 provided by the Convention; and moreover, to the partial implementation of the commitments concerning the greenhouse gases emission stabilisation.

The Polish economy specific features

5. In the Polish economy the main primary energy source is coal, and its consumption in the base year was 76.5 per cent. In 1992, this decreased to 75.3 per cent, with the increased use of oil and natural gas.

6. Polish industry is dominated by the raw material industries with relatively high participation of low processed products, with high energy and raw materials consumption, and the low rate of production renewal. The industry has a decisive role in the generation of the gross national product (GNP), but the data for 1992 shows that there is a tendency for its reduction.

7. In 1989 Poland entered the path of thorough structural and economic change. The Government priorities are mainly focused on the country's economy modernization and restructuring, with proper account given to such problems as privatisation, unemployment, social protection for the impoverished groups of the society, etc.

8. The main aim of the Polish economy for the coming decades is to realize complex reforms in all sectors to lower the energy and raw materials consumption, which should help in the implementation of the sustainable development principles. In the economy it is expressed in the tendency for such a conduct of economic activities, that with minimum use of the non-renewable resources (energy and raw materials) and with minimum environmental impact, the products achieved would be of a proper value, with a substantial role of improved technological know-how.

9. The efficiency of further actions is highly dependent on the success of the social and economic reforms programme initiated in 1999. Due to the direct impact of the greenhouse gases reduction actions on the state of the economy, the implementation of the commitments of the Convention will depend on the success of the reforms programme.

The ecological policy goals in the field of greenhouse gases

10. Taking into account the above-mentioned social and economic priorities of Poland it is understandable that the problem of greenhouse gases emission reduction taken separately is not a priority goal. However, the need to ensure the economic competitiveness and the efficient use of fossil fuels bring about the situation when realised actions allow to reduce the greenhouse gases emission (particularly carbon dioxide).

11. This goal should be achieved with market economy mechanisms, such as price changes to world's market prices levels, cessation of the subsidies for the majority of the economic sectors, financial support for the industrial plants modernisation, etc.

12. The limitation of carbon dioxide emissions to the level agreed in the international forum is one of the long term goals of the State Environment Policy approved by the Parliament (Sejm) of the Republic of Poland in 1991.

The greenhouse gases inventory for the year 1988

13. The inventory of greenhouse gases of anthropogenic emissions and sinks in Poland shows that emissions (in Gg) of these gases in 1988 were:

- carbon dioxide (CO_2) - 483 700
- methane (CH_4) - 6 060
- nitrous oxide (N_2O) - 73

- nitrogen oxides (NO_x,) - 600
- carbon oxide (CO) - 2 730
- non-methane volatile organic compounds NMVOCs - over 352

14. The values given above are valid for the base year and are the reference level for the assessment of Poland's implementation of the Convention commitments fulfilment.

15. Carbon dioxide retention in agriculture amounted to 11 750 Gg, and in forests 18 280.

The actions aimed at the greenhouse gas emissions reduction undertaken since 1988

16. The comparison of the 1988, 1990 and 1992 inventories indicates that the emissions of the most important greenhouse gases has a decreasing tendency. The permanence of tendency for the carbon dioxide emission decrease is proven by the fact that in spite of the GNP growth in 1992 a further emission decrease is noted.

17. This is due to the lowering energy consumption in the whole economy. The greenhouse gases emission reduction is caused not only by the economic recession resulting in reduced production and the decrease of the primary energy demand, but also by the economic reform forcing the actions, propitious for the greenhouse gases emission limitation. An example of such action is the large-scale activities aimed to eliminate the use of coal in small boiler-houses, in households and small production plants and to replace it with another energy carrier like gas or fuel oil. The inventories of such actions made in several areas of the country show that they resulted in the reduction of carbon dioxide by about 6500 Gg during the years 1989-1993.

18. Actions are also undertaken to increase the carbon dioxide absorption by forests, by increased forestation. Since 1988 till 1993 the forested area has increased by about 60 000 hectares.

Strategies and directions of the actions adopted by the Government in the field of the greenhouse gas emissions reduction

19. The main goals of the Polish economy are laid down in the document "The Strategy for Poland 1995-1997", approved by the Government and by the Parliament of the Republic of Poland.

20. The document assumes:

- the increase of GNP by 22 per cent;
- the inflation decrease to less that 10 per cent per year:
- the unemployment decrease.

21. Existing strategies and project prepared by the Ministries assume:

- changes leading to industrial production efficiency increase;
- implementation of the programme for the increase of the efficiency of energy use;
- rationalization of transportation and carriage system;
- directing agriculture to the improvement of product quality and forestry to forest husbandry;
- rationalization;
- implementation of water protection and use rationalization programme;
- implementation of the waste re-use programme.

The expected results of the assumed economic strategies in greenhouse gas emissions and sinks assessment in 2000

22. The forecast concerning the greenhouse gases emission, particularly carbon dioxide emissions, the most important because of its volume, indicate that in the year 2000 the emission of these gases should not exceed the 1988 level.

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